



# Department of Justice

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## **ADENA MAN RECEIVES 12-MONTH SENTENCE IN MARIJUANA AND INCOME TAX CASE**

COLUMBUS - Steven Whiting, 52, of Adena, Ohio was sentenced to serve 12 months and one day of incarceration, three years of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$11,282 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and perform 50 hours of community service for his role in a conspiracy to distribute more than 100 kilograms of marijuana and for filing a fraudulent 2002 federal income tax return with the IRS.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Jose A. Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation; and Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, Detroit Field Office announced the sentence handed down today by United States District Judge John D. Holschuh.

According to court documents and testimony, between January 2001 and December 2004, Whiting was a resident of Adena, Ohio and owner of a truck driving recruitment business known as Drivers Connection in St. Clairsville, Ohio. In December 2004, Whiting was stopped by the Arizona State Highway Patrol just south of Phoenix, AZ. A search of Whiting's vehicle revealed 289 pounds of marijuana located in the trunk. Whiting was on his way to New Mexico to deliver the marijuana to Clifford Prindle. Prindle was an independent contractor for Drivers Connection. Investigators learned that Prindle and Whiting were couriers in a marijuana distribution operation based out of Zanesville, Ohio.

For the 2002 income tax year, Whiting provided his income tax return preparer with his business income and expenses for his Schedule C business, Drivers Connection, and his wife's wage information. However, the gross receipts earned from the marijuana transportation operation was not provided to the income tax return preparer.

Whiting understated the gross receipts derived from the illegal trafficking of controlled substances in the amount of \$26,450, \$8,505, and \$5,338, for the income tax years 2000, 2001, and 2002, respectively. The total tax loss in this case was \$11,282.

On June 16, 2005, Clifford Prindle plead guilty to charges of conspiracy to distribute more than 100 kilograms of marijuana and with filing a fraudulent federal income tax return with the IRS for the 2003 income tax year. On January 12, 2006, Prindle was sentenced to serve 51 months of incarceration, 5 years supervised release, and ordered to pay \$94,808 in restitution to the IRS.

Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and the DEA, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Doug Squires, who prosecuted the case.

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